Alexander Hays and "The Blue Birds"

Brig. Gen. Alexander Hays and the Third Division, Second Corps during Longstreet's Assault

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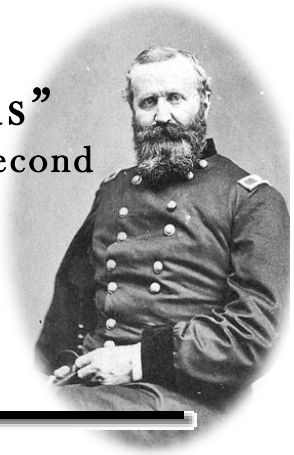


"Alex Hays is not capable of commanding a Brigade. He is a real specimen of a weak ignorant political appointment…no education and vulgar beyond measure…is what we call a bogus Regular." This was the opinion of Brigadier General Alexander Webb regarding Brig. Gen. Alexander Hays. This was, however, a minority opinion in the army.[1]

One veteran wrote that Hays, "was a man greatly beloved by all members of his old regiment, both for his bravery and his marked kindness to his men. Stern and impetuous, he diffused his energy to his men." It was remembered that Hays "would not permit any wrong or injury to be perpetrated on the poorest soldier in the regiment." A member of the 108th New York reported that Hays was "the bravest division general I ever saw in the saddle." Lt. Gen. U. S. Grant felt that Hays was "a noble man and a gallant officer." According to Grant, "He was a man who would never follow, but would always lead in battle."[2]

Alexander Hays was born in Franklin, Venango County, Pennsylvania, on July 8, 1819. His father, Samuel Hays, had been born in Ireland in 1783. Samuel Hays had held almost every office in Venango County. He had also served in the U. S. House of Representatives as U. S. Marshall for western Pennsylvania, and as a brigadier-general in the Pennsylvania state militia. He was also a pioneer iron manufacturer operating furnaces on French Creek near Franklin.[3]

Young Hays attended Mercer Academy (1832-1835) and spent four years at Allegheny College before receiving an appointment to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1840. He graduated in 1844, one year after his good friend, U.S. Grant. Among Hays's classmates were Alfred Pleasonton, Simon Bolivar Buckner, and Winfield Scott Hancock. Hays was brevetted a second lieutenant, 4th U.S. Infantry, on July 1, 1844. He was promoted to second lieutenant, 8th U.S. Infantry, on June 18, 1846. He received the brevet of first lieutenant on May 9, 1846, for "gallant conduct" in the battles of Palo Alto and Resacca de la Palma, where he was wounded. He participated in seventeen engagements in the Mexican War before resigning on April 12, 1848.[4]

Hays became engaged in the iron business in western Pennsylvania, but in 1849 went to California to seek his fortune. He returned to Pennsylvania in 1851 and became engaged in engineering and construction work. On February 19, 1846, prior to his going to Mexico, Hays was married to Annie Adams McFadden.[5]

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Hays was commissioned a major, 12th Pennsylvania Volunteers (April 25, 1861) and a captain in the 16th U.S. Infantry (May 14, 1861). He received permission to raise a regiment for three years' service, and on August 25, 1861, he was appointed colonel of the 63rd Pennsylvania. After spending the winter training and drilling in the defenses of Washington, D.C., the regiment was assigned to the 1st Brigade, Kearny's division, 3rd Corps, Army of the Potomac.[6]

While the regiment was in camp at Fort Lyon, on the road from Alexandria to Mount Vernon, it was "engaged in drill and picket duty." Hays established a school for the officers under the direct charge of Lt. Col. A.S.M. Morgan. The officers were first drilled in the school of the soldier and then introduced to tactics. The sergeants "were daily assembled and taught in the manual of arms, and in their special duties." The regiment was drilled daily, weather permitting, with special attention given "to promptness and certainty in all the movements."[7]

The men of the 63rd Pennsylvania quickly discovered that their colonel "was a thorough soldier, hot and impetuous at times, but courteous and kindly withal; he infused his spirit into his men, and it was this peculiarity that made the Sixty-third one of the most famous regiments in the war." At the beginning of their service Hays was patient with his men. He took, "great pains to instruct them in the various duties, being very lenient to their mistakes, until they had time to master all the duties of the soldier, and then he expected them to be sure to perform them properly or they would quickly hear from him in a way they did not fancy."[8]

As early as October 1, 1861, Lt. George P. Corts, the regimental adjutant, was writing,

> The colonel is constantly to be found looking after the comfort of the men. Late and early he can be found somewhere in the camp instructing in the many duties of officers and soldiers. Already he is loved by the men for his attention to their wants, and very soon they will worship him, or I am mistaken in human nature.[9]

Hays himself wrote that he was the "first up in the morning, and the last in bed at night." Since his horse was usually saddled he could be anywhere in camp "within 15 minutes." Hays felt that no regiment had a better reputation than his and that "so far as I have been able to ascertain, the confidence between commander and command is mutual."[10]

Hays, although just to his men, could, on occasion, haul "them over the coals severely." At the same time, however, Hays "would not have suffered the commanding General to abuse them." Hays was quick to see that any wrongs were righted, "and nothing brought an outburst of wrath from him quicker than to discover that someone was trying to wrong or impose upon any of his boys."[11]

One night, while the regiment was stationed near Alexandria, Virginia, a company cook was severely scalded on the legs while cooking rations. When the doctor was sent for he refused to come, saying that the cook would not die before morning and that, "I'm not going to get out in the cold night for any d__d soldier in the army." When Colonel Hays was informed of this he ordered a file of soldiers to march the doctor to the cook, and after the cook's wounds were dressed, Hays "gave that doctor such a lecture as he would likely never forget." Hays, for good measure, then placed the doctor under arrest for a week.[12]

Mrs. Hays described a visit with Colonel Hays to the regimental hospital. She found the patients "looking clean and comfortable" with most of the men suffering from rheumatism. She also wrote:

> As Alex passed along the beds he had a cheerful and pleasant word to speak to all. How kindly he was answered; some tried to get up that they might speak to him, or catch his hand. His influence is wonderful. The lady nurses speak in the highest terms of him.[13]

In June 1862, while serving on the Peninsula, several officers reported to Colonel Hays as being unfit for duty and requesting permission to go to the rear. When a lieutenant asked Hays for permission the colonel "sprang to his feet, and in the cutting tone of voice which only Hays could assume, shouted: 'There are two roads leading from this camp, one to Richmond and one to the hospital; the privates and I are going to Richmond, and every d__d officer is taking the road to the hospital.'" After that there were no more requests for sick leave from the officers. It was said that Colonel Hays "was a most kind-hearted and patient man with a private soldier, but an officer who was inclined to shirk his duty received no mercy at his hands."[14]

On June 30, 1862, at the battle of Glendale, Colonel Hays was posted to support Battery G, 2nd U. S. Artillery, along the Charles City road and was ordered to charge forward to the line of the guns. Brig. Gen. Philip Kearny called the attention of his superiors to "this most heroic action on the part of Colonel Hays and his regiment. That which grape and canister failed in effecting was now accomplished by the determined charge and rapid volleys of this foot." Gen. Kearny congratulated Hays and his men and told Hays that as soon as they got into camp the regiment would be excused "from all duty, except your own camp guard, for thirty days." At Harrison's Landing, General Kearny kept his word and "the men had nothing to do but police duty, swim, and bathe in the James River." During their stay at Harrison's Landing, July 2 to August 13, 1862, the regiment was "not called upon to do any extra duty." It was said that General Kearny, "a boon companion and intimate friend" of Hays, "was always friendly to the regiment."[15]

On the battlefield of Second Manassas, on August 29, 1862, the 63rd and 105th Pennsylvania regiments crossed an open field in their front, deployed through woods to their left, to "intercept bodies of the enemy who were annoying Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker's right flank." Once this was done the regiment formed in line in a railroad cut. At some point during the battle Hays found one of his men shot in the leg and in danger of bleeding to death. One of the men trying to help the wounded man told Hays that they had no linen or cotton bandages and could not stop the bleeding. Hays removed his coat and vest and handed his shirt to the men and told them to "make bandages out of that as far as it will go." [16]

At some point after this, Hays "was severely wounded, having one leg shattered," but not until he had "led his regiment in his usual gallant manner." Hays himself wrote that a "large ball struck the main bone between the ankle and knee, not breaking, but perhaps splintering it, glancing off and breaking the smaller bones. The entrance hole is as large as a half dollar. I assure you, I have a sore shin, but a quarter of an inch variation would have cost me my leg."[17]

On September 12, 1862, brigadier-generals David B. Birney, Henry G. Berry, and John C. Robinson "most respectfully" recommended Hays for promotion to brigadier general. They cited his service in Mexico and described him as a "brave, judicious, gallant and worthy officer."[18]

During his recuperation Hays was promoted to brigadier general of volunteers on September 29, 1862. By January 6, 1863, Hays had reported to Maj. Gen. Samuel P. Heintzelman, commanding the defenses of Washington. He was assigned "to the brigade now commanded by Col. Frederick G. D'Utassy" and was ordered to report in person to Brig. Gen. Silas Casey, commanding the division. Colonel D'Utassy was returned to his old regiment, the 39th New York. Hays's new command was scattered with two regiments and a battery of artillery stationed at Centreville, two regiments and a battery at Union Mill, and one regiment stationed at Fairfax Court House.[19]

The 3rd Brigade of Casey's division, of which Hays now assumed command, consisted of the 151st Pennsylvania, the Keystone (PA) Battery, and the 11th Massachusetts Battery. The brigade

also contained four New York regiments: the 39th, 111th, 125th, and 126th. These New York regiments did not have the best reputation in the army.[20]

The 111th, 125th, and 126th New York regiments had been raised in mid-1862 and along with the more experienced 39th New York were assigned to Harper's Ferry in August. On September 14, 1862, the entire garrison was ordered to surrender to Confederate forces under the command of Maj. Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson. The regiments then spent the next several months in Chicago at Camp Douglas, a parole camp. They were paroled and reported to Washington on November 25, 1862, and were assigned to the outer defenses. [21]

In a letter to his father-in-law, Hays wrote that he had no "assurance that my command will stand fire, but I am assured by all of the officers, that improvements are daily perceptible, both in the morale and discipline of the men." Despite being identified with "one of the most disgraceful surrenders of the war," Hays had "full confidence that in time, 'The War Cry of Harper's Ferry' will incite them to rival the deeds of older and more fortunate soldiers."[22]

Lt. David Shields, one of Hays's staff officers, wrote an account of how Hays sought to bring order and discipline in his brigade.

> Squad, company and battalion drills were kept going morning and afternoon. Heavy details were made for picket duty daily, the general believing this onerous round of duty was the most effective way to bring these troops to a just realization of their status as actually exchanged prisoners of war again in service. General Hays was tireless in this discipline, and on the go day and night, particularly in bad weather.[23]

As stated earlier, "an officer who was inclined to shirk his duty" could expect no mercy from Alexander Hays. Col. D'Utassy found this to be true, much to his regret.

One January night while Hays was inspecting his lines he rode through D'Utassy's post. Neither of the regimental camps on D'Utassy's line had any guards. Hays, with aide Lt. David Shields, rode to D'Utassy's headquarters "where all were comfortable indoors, with no guards out, and the enemy, in shape of Mosby, close at hand." Hays found D'Utassy "dressed in red flannel under-clothes." Hays ordered him to come downstairs, get on a horse, and follow Hays, without getting dressed. After a time D'Utassy asked Shields what the problem was and was informed of the "grossly unsoldierly condition of his post." When he asked what the general was going to do, he received the reply, "Ride the picket line."[24]

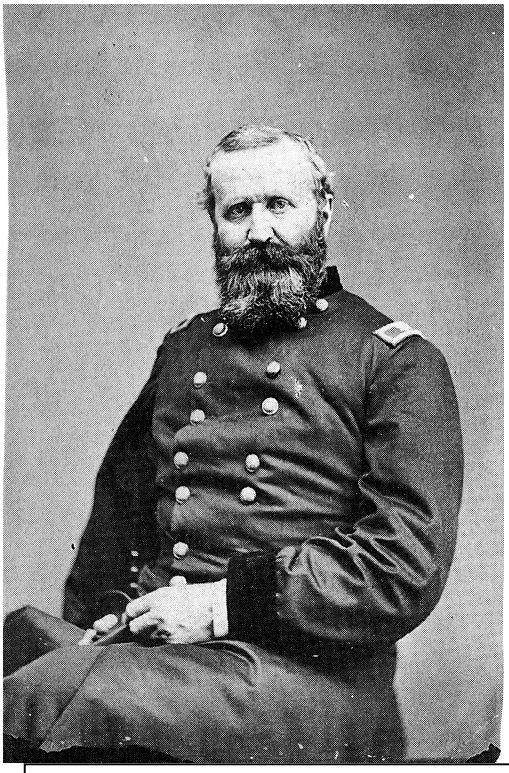
The trio arrived at Hays's headquarters after daybreak, after riding all night without missing a picket post. Hays dismounted and entered his tent, "not saying a word." Shields asked what Hays had to say to D'Utassy. Hays ordered D'Utassy to return to his headquarters under arrest. At D'Utassy's court-martial Hays presented evidence of "utter incompetency as a soldier…infamous rascality for one claiming to be an honest man, who by falsehood and perjury had been getting three times the pay he was entitled to; that such conduct had a demoralizing effect on his command." D'Utassy was found guilty of all charges and specifications, cashiered from the army, and sentenced to one year imprisonment in Sing Sing Prison, New York.[25]

Hays then proceeded to reorganize D'Utassy's old command, the 39th New York. He mustered out, "for the good of the service," all the "worthless officers and many of the men." The regiment was consolidated into a battalion of four companies under the command Maj. Hugo Hildebrandt. Hildebrandt was described as "a typical German soldier [a Prussian], a good officer, and thoroughly in General Hays' esteem." Hays knew that the regiment "lacked all the essentials of good troops, individuality, self-reliance, and aggressiveness." Hays was able to turn these men into good soldiers through "ceaseless care and vigilance." It was said that "grim old General Heintzelman smiled many a time when he learned of Alexander Hays' doings, for he knew what the regiment needed."[26]

Surgeon Charles S. Hoyt, 126th New York, recorded that the brigade was under constant drill and the men "were fast being educated in the school of the soldier." Dr. Hoyt felt that his regiment "was in fine condition and most excellent spirits. Very few sick."[27]

By May 18, 1863, Hays and his brigade were "despairing of getting into a fight." Hays now had great pride in his brigade and wrote that "'The Harper's Ferry boys' have turned out trumps, and when we do get a chance look out for blood." The brigade had just held a review and inspection and Hays had been informed by Maj. Gen. John J. Abercrombie that "there is not a better brigade in the army."[28]

Mrs. Hays wrote her father that the brigade had 2,600 men on duty. She also felt that the "sanitary condition of the brigade is wonderful, there being but three confined to bed and they are doing well." She also felt that the "great secret of the general's influence over the men is the great care he takes of them. He is everywhere, sees and hears all that is going on, corrects everything amiss, always strict but firm and just in all his orders."[29]



Brigadier General Alexander Hays. Meade Collection, CWLM

On the evening of June 19, 1863, Hays had trouble when the 2nd Corps, Army of the Potomac, under Hays' old West Point classmate, Maj. Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock, arrived in the area of Centreville. Mrs. Hays wrote that the "men were completely demoralized, no order or discipline. The officers only think of getting themselves under shelter and eating. They were committing some depredations when Alex would stand it no longer." Hays mounted his favorite horse "Dan," "buckled on his sword and pistols and dashed in amidst them, ordered them to move on, then went to General Hancock and told him that he [General Hays] commanded this post and forts and General Hancock's artillery must take up another position, all of which General Hancock has done." Hays ordered the brigade guard doubled with "the order to shoot the first man who interfered." Mrs. Hays thought that with a few more men like Alexander Hays, "this war would soon be over."[30]

Charles W. Reed, 9th Massachusetts Artillery, wrote that the trouble started when some 2nd Corps men overran a local sutler. Since the sutler was "a fine fellow and has treated us well," Capt. John Bigelow ordered his men to wedge "their way between the tent and the crowd and endeavored to have some order." This worked for a time until the crowd became unruly again, cut the ropes on the tent and sent the "tent going over in spite of all we could do." Reed wrote that General Hays rode up with a drawn revolver and "followed by a battalion of infantry who immediately surrounded our belagured Sutler." Hays was "threatening to shoot the first man that remained behind with a 2nd corps mark on." For good measure Hays ordered Bigelow to bring down two pieces of artillery and had the artillerymen stand "with double shots of canister in each hand."[31]

On June 24, 1863, the brigade was ordered from the defenses of Washington to join the 3rd Division, 2nd Corps and "constitute the Third Brigade of the division." The sick were sent to Alexandria and Washington under the care of Dr. Hoyt. Hays eliminated all surplus baggage, the men drew shelter tents, and "everything made ready for the movement."[32]

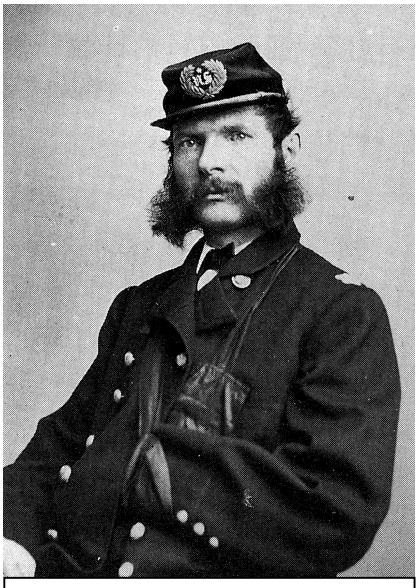
Following the battle of Chancellorsville, three regiments from the 3rd Division had been sent home to be mustered out of service. Since two of these came from the 3rd Brigade, the remaining

regiment was transferred to the 2nd Brigade on May 23, 1863, and the old 3rd Brigade was discontinued. It was this void in the division's organization that Hays's brigade now filled.

Of the other two brigades of the division, Col. Samuel S. Carroll commanded the 1st Brigade. The commander of the 2nd Brigade, Brig. Gen. William Hays (no relation to Alexander) had been captured on May 3, 1863, at Chancellorsville, so Col. Thomas A. Smyth, 1st Delaware Infantry, assumed command. [33]

Two days later, June 26, "in the midst of a drenching rain," the brigade joined the 2nd Corps at Gum Springs, Virginia. Brig. Gen. William H. French had been relieved of command of the 3rd Division and reassigned to Harper's Ferry. Hays, by reason of seniority, assumed command of the 3rd Division, 2nd Corps, and Col. George L. Willard, 125th New York, took command of Hays's old command.

Each of the seven infantry corps in the Army of the Potomac had been assigned a corps symbol as a means of identifying the various elements in the army and to inspire *esprit de corps*. The symbol for the 2nd Army Corps was a trefoil or three-leaf clover. The enlisted men were to wear these symbols on top of their hats. Each division was designated by a different color: red for the 1st, white for the 2nd, and blue for the 3rd. All of the corps, division, and brigade commanders had their own flags to distinguish them on the march and on the battlefield. Hays's flag had a white background with a blue trefoil in the middle. Hays wrote after Gettysburg that the division was known as "The Trifoils," and that his old brigade "sports the blue." Hays's old brigade, however, had joined the 2nd Corps so late in the campaign that the men had "no Corps badge to designate them."[34]



Brig. Gen. Samuel S. Carroll. Meade Collection, CWLM

Hays's new command, about 3,644 officers and men, was a mixture of experienced and inexperienced soldiers. Col. Samuel S. Carroll, commanding the 1st Brigade, was born in 1832 in Washington, D.C., where his father served as clerk of the U. S. Supreme Court. Carroll had graduated from West Point in 1856 and served on the frontier with the 10th U. S. Infantry. In 1860 he returned to West Point to serve as quartermaster of the academy and was not released for field service until November 1861. He was appointed colonel of the 8th Ohio Infantry and saw service in the Shenandoah Valley campaign of 1862, including the battles of Kernstown and Port Republic. Five days after the battle of Cedar Mountain, on August 14, 1862, Carroll was wounded while inspecting his picket posts along the Rapidan River. He commanded a brigade of the 3rd Corps during the battle of Fredericksburg. He was relieved at his own request and placed in command of a brigade in the 2nd Corps for the battle of Chancellorsville.[35]

Carroll's brigade consisted of the 14th Indiana, the 4th and 8th Ohio, and the 7th West Virginia. The 14th Indiana was originally organized for one year's service in May 1861 but was reorganized for three years' service in June 1861. They participated in the West Virginia campaign, serving in reserve at Cheat Mountain. The 4th and 8th Ohio had been organized in June of 1861, and the 7th West Virginia had been organized by December 1861. All four regiments had taken part in the 1862 Shenandoah Valley campaign and had participated in the battles of Antietam, Fredericksburg, and Chancellorsville.[36]

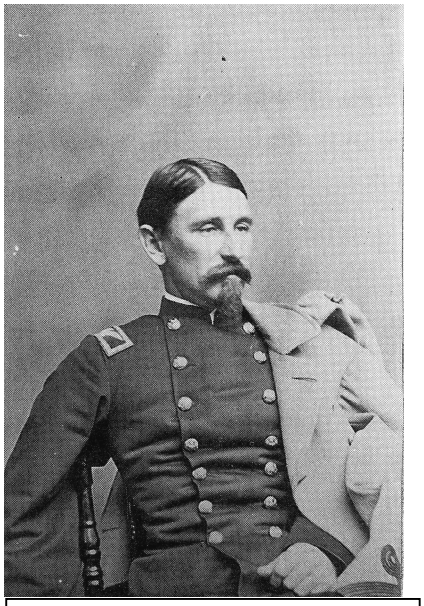
The commander of the 2nd Brigade was Col. Thomas Alfred Smyth. Smyth, born in Ireland in 1832, immigrated to the United States in 1854 and "followed a business of carving in Philadelphia." He participated in William Walker's filibustering expedition to Nicaragua and in 1858 settled in Wilmington, Delaware, as a coachmaker. He raised a company of infantry at the

beginning of the war which became part of the all-Irish 24th Pennsylvania, a three-month unit. Smyth was appointed major of the 1st Delaware, promoted to lieutenant colonel in December 1862 and to colonel in February 1863. Smyth commanded his regiment at the battles of Antietam, Fredericksburg, and Chancellorsville.[37]

Col. Thomas A. Smyth. Meade Collection, CWLM

At the battle of Chancellorsville, Smyth and his regiment, the 1st Delaware, had been assigned to the 3rd Brigade of the 3rd Division. When the other two regiments of the brigade were mustered out at the end of May, the 1st Delaware was transferred to the 2nd Brigade. By reason of seniority, Smyth assumed command of the brigade on May 23.[38]

Smyth's brigade consisted of the 14th Connecticut, the 1st Delaware, the 12th New Jersey, the 10th New York (battalion), and the 108th New York. The 14th Connecticut had been organized in August 1862. Less than a month later it was actively involved in the battle of Antietam. The regiment also saw action at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville. The 1st Delaware was raised in October 1861 and had witnessed the battle between the USS *Monitor* and the CSS *Virginia* and had participated in the battles of Antietam, Fredericksburg, and Chancellorsville. The 12th New Jersey was raised in September 1862. After serving in the Washington defenses it joined the Army of the Potomac in time to participate in the battle of Chancellorsville. The 10th New York had been organized in May 1861 for a term of two years. After the regiment left New York in 1861, all other recruits were considered to have enlisted for three years. After serving in the defenses of Washington the regiment joined the Army of the Potomac and saw action on battlefields from Gaines' Mill to Fredericksburg. On April 27, 1863, the two-year men were sent back to New York to be mustered out of service. The three-year men were reorganized into a battalion of four companies and assigned as the provost guard for the 3rd Division of the 2nd Corps. The 108th New York was raised in August 1862, and after serving in the Washington defenses, joined the Army of the Potomac and participated in its battles from Antietam to Fredericksburg.[39]



Col. George L. Willard. Meade Collection, CWLM

The 3rd Brigade, Hays's old command, was now commanded by Col. George Lamb Willard, 125th New York. Willard was born in New York City on August 15, 1827. During the Mexican War he enlisted in the 15th Ohio Volunteers. Willard received an appointment as a brevet second lieutenant, 8th U.S. Infantry, on the recommendation of Major General Winfield Scott, for gallantry and "distinguished service through the war." Willard served with the 8th Infantry almost continuously in Texas and New Mexico from 1848 to 1861, rising to the rank of captain on April 27, 1861. He served with his regiment in the early part of the war before being promoted to major, 19th U.S. Infantry, on February 19, 1862. He served with this regiment during the Peninsula campaign and at times had command of the regiment. He was appointed colonel, 125th New York, on August 27, 1862.[40]

It was said that Willard "was the embodiment of a true soldier, strict when on duty, cool amid danger, of oft-proven bravery, respected alike by subordinates and superiors." Even Maj. Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock felt that Willard was "one of the best officers of his age and rank."[41]

The 2nd Corps crossed the Potomac River at Edward's Ferry, on pontoon bridges, on June 26. Capt. Benjamin W. Thompson, 111th New York, wrote that although the march was not excessive, "the day was showery so that we had wet shirts and very muddy roads." Thompson reported that there was only one road to the ferry, and that it was so crowded that "we could only march a few yards at a time and stand sometimes ten minutes in the ankle deep mud waiting to take a few steps." Thompson estimated that it had taken four hours to march one and one-half miles.[42]

The 2nd Corps then moved from Poolesville, Maryland, to Barnesville. Hays reported that on June 28 the men left Barnesville and marched to near Frederick. On the 29th the march commenced at 1 P.M. and carried the men through "Liberty, Johnsville, and Union Bridge, to Uniontown, Md," a distance of more than thirty miles. Hays finally encamped at 3 A.M. on June 30.[43]

Captain Thompson remembered the march from Frederick to Uniontown very vividly:

> We had marched a mile or two when we came to a ford of the Monocacy River which we had to cross. There were good fences and flattened logs upon which our men could have crossed almost or quite dry shod. But we were brought down to quick time, arms on the right shoulder, and marched directly through the stream, hip deep to the tallest of us. It is an invariable rule after troops have forded a stream, unless under the enemy's fire, to halt them long enough to take off their shoes, wring out their stockings and wipe their feet. But Hancock marched us several miles at a rapid pace before he allowed us a breath.[44]

Thompson believed Hancock "was especially ill-humored that day," because of Maj. Gen. George G. Meade's appointment to the command of the Army of the Potomac. However Hancock, who had started his march at 7 A.M., had been forced to push his men in this manner because the order for his march had been delayed for three hours. The order had "been left with an irresponsible person at these headquarters, a clerk, who failed to deliver it." General Meade also regretted the delay and suggested that the clerk "should be brought to punishment." Hancock replied that "the man in question has already been brought to punishment. Such a mistake can hardly occur again." Hancock would make up for the delay "by short cuts and rapid marching."[45]

Hancock did issue a general order thanking "the troops of his command for the great exertions they have made this day in achieving a march of full thirty miles. This severe labor would have only been exacted of them from urgent necessity."[46]

Hays informed his wife that he had "been in the saddle for the past twenty-four hours. I need not tell you that I am much fatigued." Hays also reported that "the army is much pleased with the new commander."[47]

The 2nd Corps rested at Uniontown on June 30. The next day, July 1, at 6:30 A.M., the command marched to Taneytown, Maryland, "going into bivouac about 11 a.m." However, at 1:30 P.M. the command received orders to march toward Gettysburg. After marching almost thirteen miles, the 2nd Corps arrived within three miles of Gettysburg by 11 P.M. and bivouacked for the night in the area of the Round Tops.[48]

On the morning of July 2, Hays moved his command up the Taneytown road and "arrived within about a mile of the town." The division was assigned a position along Cemetery Ridge "nearly parallel" with the Emmitsburg road and facing to the west. Hays reported that a "stone wall just below the crest of the hill gave much strength to the position, and an open space of half a mile in our front afforded the artillery posted on the right and left flanks a fair field for effective service."[49]

Hays's right flank was to make a connection with the 2nd Brigade, 2nd Division, 11th Corps. Col. Orland Smith, the brigade commander, reported that his left regiment, the 136th New York, was to connect with the 2nd Corps. Col. James Wood, Jr., of the 136th New York, reported that his regiment was placed "on the road leading from Gettysburg to Taneytown, about 30 yards in front of the artillery…we were placed between the fire of our own and the enemy's artillery." Wood also reported that "three or more companies of this regiment were kept constantly detailed, and deployed as skirmishers, to take care of and keep at proper distance the enemy's sharpshooters." Wood wrote that he "substantially" occupied this position for all three days of the battle.[50]

Although the stone wall afforded some protection, Lt. David Shields wrote that it was a "low stone wall [about knee-high]" and that in "many places tumbled down." The men, however, replaced the stones to have "some protection against musketry and flying fragments of shells if the men lay flat on the ground." Shields thought the protection the wall afforded "had been greatly exaggerated, especially by Confederate writers." The wall did not extend north of the Brian barn.[51]

The land Hays's division occupied was owned by several farmers. The farmer most associated with the position was Abraham Brian. Born in Maryland in 1804, Brian had moved to Gettysburg by 1840. In 1857 he purchased twelve acres from James A. Thompson. The property contained two dwelling houses: one near the crest of Cemetery Ridge and a smaller tenant house along the Emmitsburg road. Brian and his family lived in the house near the crest. He usually kept at least one or two horses and cows. In 1863 he was growing wheat, barley, and hay, and had some of his land in meadows and orchards. The Brian family was not living in the house at the time of the battle. As members of the local African-American community, the Brians had left the Gettysburg area on the first news of the Confederate invasion, probably joining the exodus to Lancaster County. Some reports indicate that General Hays used the Brian home as his headquarters.[52]

Protecting Hays's flanks were Battery I, 1st U. S. Artillery, Lt. George A. Woodruff commanding, and Battery A, 1st Rhode Island Artillery, Capt. William A. Arnold commanding. Woodruff was placed among the trees of Ziegler's Grove, and Arnold was placed about "150 yards to the left." Woodruff's battery occupied a position "which projected slightly beyond the line."[53]

Operating with Hays's division was the 1st Company, Massachusetts Sharpshooters, also known as "Andrew Sharpshooters," under Capt. William Plummer and Lt. Emerson L. Bicknell. This unit had been raised in August 1861 and was originally armed with telescopic rifles. These rifles were exchanged after the battle of Antietam for Sharps rifles, but some telescopic rifles were retained. The company was normally attached to the 15th Massachusetts, 1st Brigade, 2nd Division, 2nd Corps, but at Gettysburg it was "unattached" and operated along the line of Hays's division. [54]

Colonel Carroll wrote that his brigade was "formed in line of regiments, right in front, between Woodruff's battery on the left and the Taneytown Road on the right, at about 8 a.m." on July 2. Colonel Smyth reported that his brigade was placed in position at about 4 A.M. "on the left of the First Brigade." Hays placed the 3rd Brigade "by battalion in mass near a barn a little south of the hill known as Cemetery Hill."[55]

Hays divided his command into three bodies: a main line, a reserve, and an advanced-guard or skirmish line. It was the job of the advanced-guard or skirmish line "to keep a good look-out for the enemy and when in his immediate presence, to take all means to be accurately informed of his strength, position, and movements." It was also the job of the skirmish line that once the enemy started to advance "to hold him in check long enough to give the main body ample time to be prepared for his attack." This skirmish line would normally be placed about 300 to 400 paces in front of the main line. The distance between each skirmisher was to be no more than five paces.[56]

According to the army manuals of the time, when the enemy began to advance, the strength of the skirmish line's position dictated whether it should fall back or not. If the position was weak, it

should be abandoned "after a suitable show of resistance." If, however, the position was a strong one, "then it should be pertinaciously maintained."[57]

Such a position was to be found in Hays's front at the William Bliss farm. This farm had the misfortune to be situated an almost equal distance between Cemetery Ridge and the Confederate positions on Seminary Ridge. The barn was described as being "almost a citadel in itself." The barn was about seventy-five feet long and thirty-three feet wide. The lower story was ten feet high and was built of stone. The second story was built of brick and was sixteen feet to the eaves. It was a bank barn with the bank on the west side of the barn. The house was a two-story, weather-boarded frame-and-log structure. The front of the house had three rooms, two front doors, and a total length of about fifty feet.[58]

At one point the 39th New York was sent to the support of the skirmishers at the Bliss Farm. They advanced a little to the north of the farm and started to give way under pressure. Hays, in an act of "superb gallantry," rode to the skirmish line to steady the troops. Col. Clinton D. MacDougall, 111th New York, wrote that that "was the first and last time I ever saw a division commander with his flag and staff on the skirmish line – they were targets for hundreds of sharpshooters."[59]

Hays wrote that he "dashed over the plain, followed by my standard-bearer [who is a reckless, devil-may-care Irishman]. We rallied the runaways, put them in position again, retaking the barn. This was in full view of both lines and fair range of the enemy's bullets."[60]

The men of Andrew Sharpshooters were also involved in the struggle for the Bliss farm but from long range. The sharpshooters, stationed along Cemetery Ridge, were using their James target rifles to fire at the barn. They worked in squads of three. One would fire and the other two would count to three and then fire. The theory was that the enemy, seeing the smoke from the first shot, would duck. One of the second shots would probably find its target. Capt. Richard H. Thompson, 12th New Jersey, wrote, "Alas, how little we thought human life was the stake for which this game was being played."[61]

Even after coming off the skirmish line things could be warm along the main line. Sgt. George A. Bowen, 12th New Jersey, remembered that in front of his line was a small tree about five to six inches in diameter. A cannon ball struck the tree a glancing shot and "it went through a man sitting along side me in the breast coming out just above his 'Crupper bone' crushing everything to a pulp and scattering it around covering me and my food." Bowen's supper had consisted of four pieces of hard tack which he had traded for a bottle of preserved currants someone had found in the Bliss house. "I wiped them off," remembered Bowen, "and ate them as it was all I had or could get and I was very hungry."[62]

Lt. Col. Franklin Sawyer, 8th Ohio, received orders from Colonel Carroll at about 4 P.M., July 2, to move his regiment "forward to the picket line in front of our position and on the left of the pickets of the Eleventh Corps." Sawyer conducted his move "under a smart fire of the enemy's pickets and sharpshooters." Sawyer posted four of his companies on a more advanced line. He later received an order from Colonel Carroll "to maintain his position at all hazards, as he would be supported by the rest of the brigade."[63]

However, at about dark, Colonel Carroll received orders "to move immediately to the assistance of part of the Eleventh Corps supporting batteries on Cemetery Hill." Carroll moved his brigade, minus the 8th Ohio, to East Cemetery Hill to help stop a Confederate assault. Carroll was to maintain this position until July 5. Col. Sawyer's orders were never changed.[64]

The history of Col. George L. Willard and his 3rd Brigade's operations on July 2 were to be "written in blood." Late in the afternoon, Hays ordered Willard to move his brigade "from its position by the left flank about a quarter of a mile toward the left of the line, where it was formed in line of battle." This position was in the area of the present-day Pennsylvania Monument.[65]

Willard aligned his brigade as if on dress parade despite the incoming fire. The brigade "advanced over declining ground, through a dense underbrush" to Plum Run "in as good order as the circumstances of the case would admit of." Willard and his men now confronted the

Confederate brigade of Brig. Gen. William Barksdale. Barksdale's men fired on the brigade as it advanced "which fire was returned by a portion of the brigade without halting." The brigade then advanced at a "charge bayonets," many of the men shouting "remember Harper's Ferry," driving Barksdale's men back from the swale toward the Emmitsburg road ridge. Willard now found his brigade under fire from a Confederate battery located in the Peach Orchard. As the brigade was retiring through the underbrush, Willard was struck in the head by a shell fragment and killed. Col. Eliakim Sherrill, 126th New York, took command of the brigade and returned to the Ziegler's Grove area.[66]

Willard's brigade had started the day with about 1,500 officers and men. In the charge through the swale the brigade lost close to 500 officers and men. Hays reported that the "acts of traitors at Harper's Ferry had not tainted their patriotism."[67]

The evening of July 2 was not an easy one for the men in the ranks. Sgt. E. B. Tyler, 14th Connecticut, which was in support and to the right of Arnold's battery, remembered that he and his comrades laid with "our knapsacks plumb up to the base of the stone wall and pillowed our heads thereon, not being allowed to divest ourselves of any other arms or equipments, we sought for the rest and the sleep we so much needed."[68]

Captain Thompson, 111th New York, recalled that after returning from the fighting in the Plum Run swale, "without meat, bread or coffee, we cast ourselves down on the ground as thoroughly worn out and exhausted in mind, brain and stomach as men could well be." Thompson also reported that the bands, on the night of July 2, were placed between the troops and the hospitals in the rear in order "to drown the cries of the wounded and those who were being operated upon."[69]

Some of the men of the 126th New York were assisting the surgeons "in hunting for the dead and wounded." Thompson recalled,

> Long after midnight, the ambulance corps was busy picking up the wounded and hauling their groaning loads to the rear. Every house and barn for a mile or more in our rear was taken for hospitals… But the most doleful sounds that broke the night stillness were the cries for water and help that came from the poor sufferers on the field who were in an agony lest they should be missed in the search and left to perish unaided.[70]

Despite all that was going on around them, Thompson stated that "most of us slept like logs." At dawn on July 3 the men were awakened not to receive food rations but instead to be issued sixty rounds of ammunition, "a suggestive hint for the day's work before us." Thompson also remembered how "fiercely hungry we were that Friday morning, July Third, 1863. We took our belts up several inches and smoked our pipes continuously. Without the sedative effect of tobacco, it seemed as if we could not have endured the fast."[71]

General Hays simply reported that the "ensuring night passed in comparative quietness, our men resting on their arms." Colonel Smyth reported that the "firing ceased about 9 p.m., the remainder of the night being quiet."[72]

The early morning hours of July 3 along Cemetery Ridge were relatively quiet. However, starting at about 8 A.M., the Confederates "suddenly opened fire upon our position." The fire resulted in the explosion of three limbers belonging to Battery A, 4th U. S. Artillery, "but otherwise causing little loss." The Federal batteries made little reply except for Woodruff's battery, which had "eight separate engagements with the enemy."[73]

Two companies from the 111th New York, under the command of Capt. Sebastian D. Holmes, had spent the morning hours on the skirmish line. They were relieved by Maj. Hugo Hildebrand and a portion of the 39th New York "a little after noon." Both Holmes and Hildebrand wanted to assemble their respective commands from behind Abraham Brian's tenant house along the Emmitsburg road. Hildebrand ordered Holmes away, an order Holmes refused to obey. Hildebrand "attempted to draw his revolver," but Holmes got "the drop" on him. Hildebrand

reported Holmes's action to Col. Clinton D. MacDougall, commanding the 111th New York. MacDougall later asked Holmes why he did not shoot Hildebrand. Holmes believed he would "have been compelled to do it if he had drawn his revolver."[74]

The fighting for the control of the Bliss farm had raged throughout July 2 and into the morning hours of July 3. Hays finally had had enough of the back-and-forth fighting. He ordered Maj. Theodore G. Ellis to take eight companies from the 14th Connecticut, about 136 men, and capture both the house and the barn. By that time the position had changed hands eleven times. The fighting had involved close to 4,300 soldiers from both sides and had resulted in about 830 casualties. Approximately thirty-three companies from seven different regiments of Hays's division were at or near the center of the fighting for the Bliss farm.

Once the 14th Connecticut had captured the position, Hays asked for a volunteer to take a message to Major Ellis. Sgt. Charles A. Hitchcock, 111th New York, "a slender, red-haired, fiery young man of twenty-two years of age, a man of no mean artistic merit," remembered the situation:

> I had just come from the skirmish line, as Gen. Hays and staff rode to our line of battle. I was sitting on the ground eating hard-tack, and heard the Gen. say to MacDougall [Col. Clinton D. MacDougall, 111th New York], he would like a volunteer to burn those buildings…I looked around to see if anyone was going. As McDougall repeated the order or request in a loud voice, as no one appeared to volunteer I got up and told the Gen. I would go…[75]

Hitchcock, who was given a box of matches and some newspapers by Colonel MacDougall, followed a zigzag course across the field and delivered the orders to Major Ellis. Ellis reported that having "received orders to burn these buildings, they were fired in several places, after removing from them our killed and wounded." Hays wrote that he ordered the buildings to be burned because he anticipated a Confederate advance in the afternoon and the buildings "interrupted the fire of our artillery." It is also possible that Hays was just tired of the loss of life expended for control of these two buildings. If the buildings were not there the position would not have to be "pertinaciously maintained."[76]

Colonel Smyth's 2nd Brigade occupied the front of Hays's line from the Brian barn, on the right, to Arnold's Rhode Island Battery, on the left. The 12th New Jersey was on the right of the brigade, next to the Brian barn. The 1st Delaware was to its left. The 14th Connecticut, returning from burning the Bliss buildings, found its position in line occupied by the 1st Delaware and was forced to take a position behind the front line. The men of the 10th New York Battalion "were encamped at division headquarters" and were then deployed in the rear of the division "for the purpose of arresting stragglers."[77]

Willard's brigade, after returning from the fight along Plum Run, occupied its original position prior to the battle. This placed the brigade "near a barn a little south of the hill known as Cemetery Hill." This would have placed the brigade in or near the apple orchard of the Brian farm.[78]

Most of Colonel Carroll's 1st Brigade had received orders at "about dark" on July 2 "to move immediately to the assistance of part of the Eleventh Corps supporting batteries on Cemetery Hill as they were being driven back." The bulk of Carroll's brigade would remain on East Cemetery Hill until July 5. The exception was the 8th Ohio under Lt. Col. Franklin Sawyer. Sawyer had received orders on July 2 to move his regiment to the picket line "in front of our position and on the left of the pickets of the Eleventh Corps." Sawyer placed four companies "as an advanced line" and supported them with the balance of the regiment. He also received orders "to hold my line to the last man." These orders were never changed.[79]

Around 11 A.M., after the firing of the Bliss buildings, a lull settled over the battlefield.[80] The quiet," wrote Capt. A. P. Seeley of the 111th New York, "which then succeeded was unbroken

until 1 p.m., when there was opened upon our position a cannonading and shelling unparalleled, it is believed, in warfare." General Hays wrote that the Confederates "opened upon our front the most terrific and uninterrupted fire from artillery."[81]

This cannonade, preceding Pickett's Charge, was vividly remembered by the veterans. A member of the 126th New York wrote,

> Words are powerless to convey an idea of the tremendous uproar of more than 200 cannon, sending through the air every variety of missile, grape and canister, shell and chain-shot, bolt and slug, with whirr and hiss, and screech or rumbling thunder, mingled with the shouted orders of the Captains, and the sudden death cry of wounded artillery horses. Only a MILTON could find and put language together that would give even a faint idea of the "confusion worse confounded" of such a scene, which, Heaven grant, may not be witnessed again on this war-cursed planet.[82]

Capt. Benjamin W. Thompson, 111th New York, retained a vivid recollection of this fire:

> I know of only one word that can describe our position at that time and that isn't used much except in church and in the army. The lurid rays of a July sun beating down on us, the appalling roar of at least three hundred pieces of artillery, the stifling fumes of burning sulphur from the exploding shrapnel, all combined to make a heat as unendurable at least as the Valley of the Jordon, not to make any warmer comparison.[83]

The 108th New York was in support of Woodruff's battery. The regiment was lying in line between the guns and the line of limbers. Woodruff had remarked to Hays on July 2 "that the regiment would be somewhat in the way when passing ammunition." Hays, however, "determined that the regiment should remain there." This placed the regiment in the midst of Ziegler's Grove and in line to catch any over-shots aimed at Woodruff's battery. The regiment's commander, Lt. Col. Francis E. Pierce, "showed the greatest unconcern, passing along his line and encouraging his men."[84]

Cpl. Chauncey L. Harris wrote to his father on July 8 with a vivid description of the cannonade:

> It was the hardest fire the 108th ever experienced – perfectly awful – murderous. Not a second but a shell-shot or ball flew over or by us. Large limbs were torn from the trunks of the oak trees under which we lay and precipitated down upon our heads. One shell came shrieking and tearing through the trees with the velocity of lightning, striking a caisson, causing it to explode, wounding several… Small trees were cut down and large ones shattered almost to pieces. Five different cannon balls struck a large oak three feet in diameter which stood not five feet from where I lay, and one of them passed entirely through it.[85]

More than one veteran recalled how the artillery "sounded as if all the furies of the lower regions had been let loose." Lt. David Shields, Hays's aide, remembered, "with the thunder and flashing of over two hundred guns the smoke gradually darkens the sky, and the screaming, hissing, sputtering projectiles continue to fall, increasing into a steady and ceaseless rain. Destruction is all about us."[86]

Colonel Smyth was wounded "in the nose from a piece of shell" while trying to rally some men who had been straggling. General Hays ordered Lieutenant Theron E. Parsons, 108th New York, "to tell Colonel Pierce to take command of the brigade."[87]

Sgt. Charles A. Hitchcock, 111th New York, was struck in the forearm "by a splinter struck from a rail by a shell which bursted nearby." Hitchcock thought his arm was broken and started for the Widow Leister farm nearby, which was being used as a temporary hospital. Hitchcock sat on the floor of the barn with his back against a large beam. A "spent cannon ball crashed through the side of the barn hitting the beam [I suppose this is correct…] directly back of me, and knocked me some distance from where I was sitting, stunned and breathless but conscious…happily disappointed at finding myself whole."[88]

The 111th New York reported at least ten men killed or mortally wounded by shell fire, including Lt. John H. Drake, "an officer loved and lamented by the whole regiment." One man, Pvt. Gustavus Ritter, had both legs taken off below the knee.[89]

Colonel MacDougall wrote that just as "this charge commenced a sharpshooter of the enemy shot the lower bone of my left arm in two. I had it bound up and remained with my command…"[90]

Sgt. Benjamin Hirst, 14th Connecticut, was on the skirmish line just to the west of the Emmitsburg road. He wrote within days of the battle,

> About noon commenced the Fiercest Canonading I ever heard, the shot and shell came from Front and Right and Left. It makes my Blood Tingle in my veins now; to think of. Never before did I hear such a roar of Artilery, it seemed as if all the Demons in Hell were let loose, and were Howling through the Air. Turn your eyes which way you will the whole of Heavens were filled with Shot and Shell, Fire and Smoke…To add to all this was our own Batteries in full Blaze, every shot from which seemed to pass over our heads; it was a terrible situation to be in between those two fires; how we did Hug the ground expecting every moment was to be our last.[91]

General Hays spent most of the cannonade "riding up and down the line in front of us, exhorting the 'boys' to stand fast and fight like men. Shell, shot, nor the bullets of the Rebel sharpshooters seemed to intimidate him in the least; in fact, he paid not the least attention to them." Cpl. Chauncy L. Harris thought Hays was "the bravest division general I ever saw in the saddle."[92]

During the cannonade Hays's troops remained positioned along Cemetery Ridge. The 126th New York was stationed to the right of the 108th New York. The 108th New York was in Ziegler's Grove in support of Woodruff's battery. Lieutenant David Shields, under orders from Hays, brought the 111th New York to the front line with its left flank overlapping the right flank of the 12th New Jersey. The right of the 12th New Jersey was near the south side of Brian's barn. The right flank of the 111th New York was marked by a large oak tree standing at the head of the Brian farm lane on the north side of the barn. The 1st Delaware, next to the 12th New Jersey, extended the line to the south.[93]

After returning from the Bliss farm, the 14th Connecticut was placed just to the rear of the 1st Delaware and in support of Arnold's battery on its left. To the left of the battery were two companies of the 71st Pennsylvania, 2nd Brigade, 2nd Division, 2nd Corps. To the rear of the 14th Connecticut was the 125th New York. Also on this second line may have been two of the four companies of the 39th New York. The two other companies of the 39th New York, after coming off the skirmish line, became intermixed between the 111th New York and the 12th New Jersey. Each of the four companies of the 39th New York numbered about forty-five men on July 3. The 10th New York Battalion was stationed along the Taneytown road as the division provost guard. The 8th Ohio continued to hold its advanced position along the Emmitsburg road near the David Ziegler farm.[94]

The batteries of the 2nd Corps were taking a pounding from the Confederate cannonade. Woodruff, with some help from the 108th New York, moved "his pieces a short distance to the

rear, out of sight of the enemy, and somewhat under cover of the hill." Arnold's battery, on Hays's left, had "kept up a steady reply for more than an hour." By that time Arnold's battery "was entirely disabled and went off the ground." Major Ellis, 14th Connecticut, moved his regiment "so as to occupy the vacant space." As Arnold's battery would have occupied a frontage of about eighty-two yards, the 14th, with barely 130 officers and men, was forced to assume a single-rank formation instead of a two-rank formation in order to cover as much of Arnold's vacant position as possible.[95]

At approximately 3 P.M. "a heavy column of the enemy moved forward in three lines, preceded by a strong line of skirmishers, debouched from the wood opposite our line." Colonel Smyth reported that the Confederate infantry "moved upon our position in three lines, preceded by skirmishers." Maj. Theodore G. Ellis, 14th Connecticut, wrote,

> About this time two lines of battle, extending across the plain for more than a mile, preceded by a line of skirmishers and re-enforced on the right and left by a third line, were observed to emerge from our front, and advanced steadily across the intervening plain. The spectacle was magnificent. They advanced in perfect order, the line of skirmishers firing.[96]

Lt. Emerson L. Bicknell, of Andrew's sharpshooters, reported that just before the charge commenced he had "gathered up" all the stragglers from other units that he could find in the Ziegler's Grove area and that Gen. Hays formed them into a battle line "just to the right of the Bryan house…" He added, "While the enemy were advancing to the Emmitsburg Road, General Hays drilled the line in the manual of arms." Hays probably did this in order to steady the men under these trying circumstances.[97]

Sergeant Hirst wrote that the skirmish line rallied on the reserves in the Emmitsburg road "but not in confusion." He added, "Sometimes we about Face and return their Skirmishers fire." Hirst and his fellow skirmishers continued to fall back to Cemetery Ridge, "bringing our wounded with us." The two companies of skirmishers re-formed on the right flank of the 14th Connecticut.[98]

After rejoining his regiment, Sergeant Hirst noted,

> now we have a short breathing spell and can Note the Intense anxiety depicted on every countenance. It was, indeed, an anxious moment. One you can see is looking at the far off home he will never see again. Another is looking at his little ones, as he mechanically empties his cartridge-box on the ground before him, that he may load more quickly, determined to part with life as dearly as possible. Others are communing with Him before whom so many will shortly have to appear. We must hold this line to the last man.[99]

A soldier in the 125th New York feared that "our line would give way as I noticed the uneasiness of some of the men but at this critical moment some of the men began to cheer and the spirit was soon spread along our line and cheer on cheer rent the air and we all fought with increased vigor."[100]

What could Hays's men have seen as the Confederates were advancing across the open field? At 2,000 yards the line of infantry would have appeared as a black line. At 1,200 yards the individual ranks would become visible. The heads of the infantry and the motions of the legs would become visible at 1,000 yards. Individuals would be distinctly visible at 600 yards, and the colors became distinguishable at 400 yards. Between 150 and 200 yards Hays's men would see the line of the enemy soldiers' eyes. By 80 yards the eyes become distinct points. The whites of their eyes could be seen at between 25 and 30 yards.[101]

The troops approaching Hays's position were from Maj. Gen. Henry Heth's division, under Brig. Gen. J. Johnston Pettigrew, and two brigades from Maj. Gen. William D. Pender's division, under the command of Maj. Gen. Isaac R. Trimble. These troops constituted the left flank of Longstreet's assault, commonly known as Pickett's Charge. The four brigades under Pettigrew were commanded by, from Hays's left to right, Col. Birkett D. Fry, Col. James Keith Marshall, Brig. Gen. Joseph R. Davis, and Col. John M. Brockenbrough. The two brigades under Trimble were led by Col. W. Lee J. Lowrance and Brig. Gen. James H. Lane. These troops had been positioned with their right flank just north of the present-day Virginia Monument and along an east-west fence line. The left flank rested near the present-day entrance to the McMillan Woods youth campground. Brockenbrough's brigade, about 500 men, was aiming straight for Colonel Sawyer and his 200 men of the 8th Ohio.

Just prior to the charge, the men of Smyth's brigade "had collected all the spare guns, had prepared a large supply of cartridges, and laid them in rows beside them." Lt. John L. Brady, 1st Delaware, remembered how the men "had collected all the unused arms, left behind the works, by those who were previously killed or wounded, had them properly charged, and distributed along the line in readiness for immediate use."[102]

The men of the 12th New Jersey emptied their cartridge boxes and placed their ammunition "on the ledges of stone in front of them where they could the more easily use it." The regiment was armed with .69-caliber smoothbore muskets that fired a buck-and-ball cartridge – one large ball surrounded by three buck-shot. The musket had an effective range of perhaps 100 yards. There is no contemporary evidence to support the story that the Jerseymen had opened their cartridges, thrown away the large round ball, and then re-stuffed the cartridges with several rounds of buckshot.[103]

Almost as soon as the Confederate infantry left Seminary Ridge, the Federal artillery reopened fire. Woodruff called on the 108th New York for help in moving his guns back to the edge of Ziegler's Grove "to await the approach of the rebel infantry." Colonel Pierce also provided "a detail to carry ammunition from the limbers to the pieces." Woodruff gave his battery "the necessary orders to prepare for the struggle which was coming."[104]

Lt. Tully McCrea, of Woodruff's battery, wrote,

> We, with the smoothbores, loaded with canister and bided our time. When they arrived within five hundred yards, we commenced to fire and the slaughter was dreadful. Never was there such a splendid target for light artillery… At the command "Commence firing" everyone worked with a will and two rounds of canister per minute were delivered from each gun.[105]

Colonel Sawyer offered this vivid recollection of the effect of Woodruff's fire:

> They were at once enveloped in a dense cloud of smoke and dust. Arms, heads, blankets, guns and knapsacks were thrown and tossed into the air. Their track, as they advanced was strewn with dead and wounded. A moan went up from the field, distinctly to be heard amid the storm of battle, but on they went, too much enveloped in smoke and dust now to permit us to distinguish their lines or movements, for the mass appeared more like a cloud of moving smoke and dust than a column of troops. Still it advanced amid the now deafening roar of artillery and storm of battle.[106]

Sawyer probably believed that he had three options at this point. He could stay where he was and hope for the best, he could fall back to the main line, or he could chose a third option. Sawyer "advanced my reserve to the picket front, and as the rebel line came within about 100 yards, we

poured in a well-directed fire, which broke the rebel line, and it soon fled in the wildest confusion."[107]

The Confederate unit taking the brunt of the fire from Woodruff, Sawyer, and the Federal batteries on Cemetery Hill was Brockenbrough's brigade. While Brockenbrough's men would never admit that their line had been broken, there is plenty of evidence to prove otherwise. Lt. Col. J. McLeod Turner, 7th North Carolina, of Lane's brigade, recalled that his line, "was met by crowds of stragglers coming to the rear, and in such numbers that I ordered my men to charge bayonets in order to compel them to go around the flank of my regiment to prevent their breaking our line; these men were from Brockenbrough's brigade." Brig. Gen. Edward L. Thomas, in Long Lane, remembered that Brockenbrough's brigade did not advance beyond the Emmitsburg road.[108]

Once the Confederate line reached the fences along the Emmitsburg road, approximately 130 yards from the Brian barn, Hays's line of infantry began to open fire. It was said that Hays himself shouted the word "Fire." Sgt. George A. Bowen, 12th New Jersey, wrote that his line was pouring "in the most deadly kind of fire, they fell like wheat before the garner." Maj. Theodore G. Ellis, 14th Connecticut, wrote that "No firing was done till the enemy reached the last fence, about 150 or 200 yards off, when I gave the command. For a few minutes there was a roar of musketry. Then we observed a clean cut through both the rebel lines opposite the Sharp's Rifles."[109]

Lt. David Shields reported that "by the time the second fence and the one nearest to us was crossed…there was no semblance of formation remaining, only a great mass of desperate men pushing on, the color-bearers keeping well to the front." A veteran from the 1st Delaware recalled that "such an appalling sheet of flame burst from our line that the rebel ranks melted away like wax." Pvt. William P. Haines, 12th New Jersey, wrote: "Like a sheet of fire the Twelfth New Jersey hurled the buck and ball at them; they climb the fences, with their lines all broken."[110]

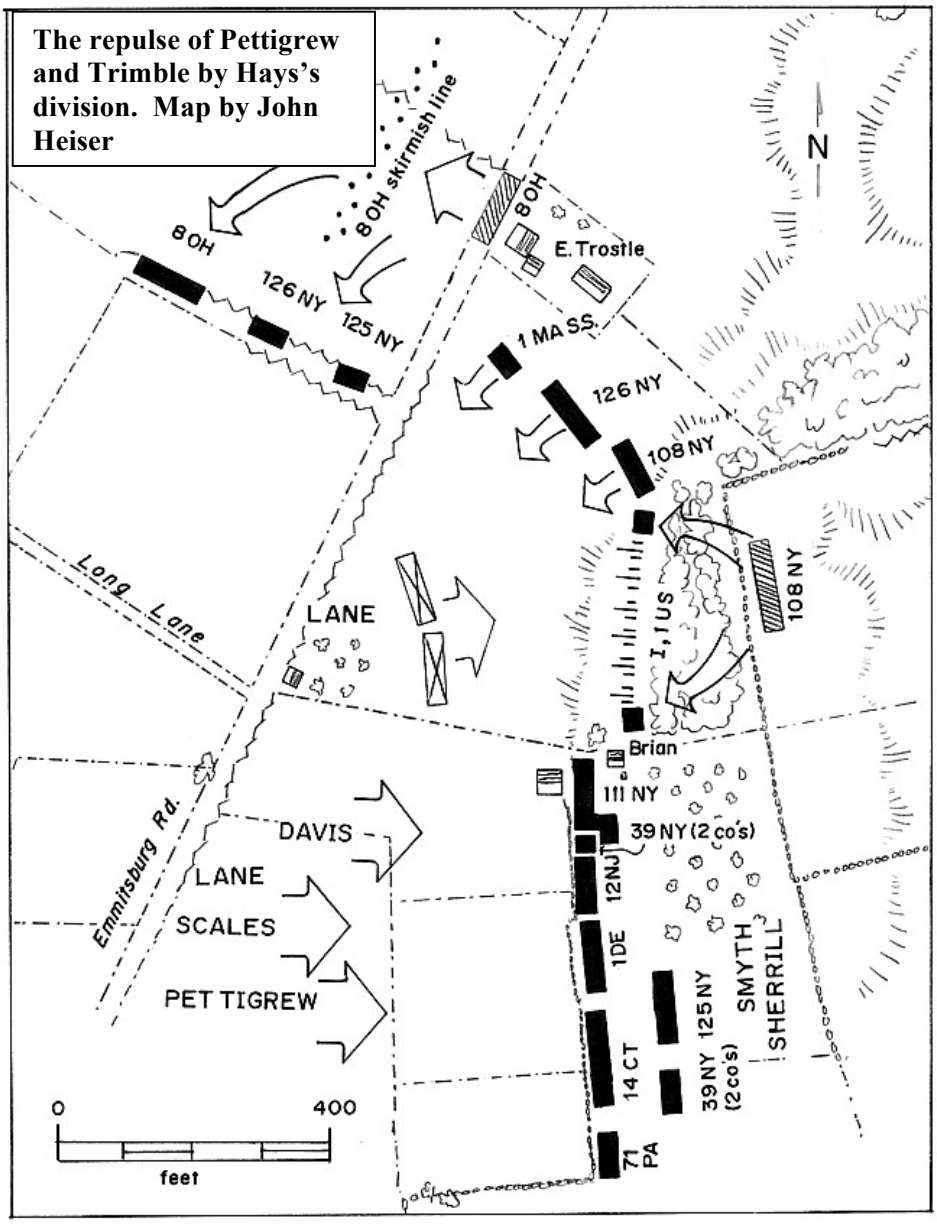
Hays reported, "When within 100 yards of our line of infantry, the fire of our men could no longer be restrained. Four lines rose from behind our stone wall, and before the smoke of our first volley had cleared away, the enemy, in dismay and consternation, were seeking safety in flight."[111]

Sgt. Bowen remembered that the Confederates continued to advance "until they were within a dozen feet of us when those that were left threw down their guns and surrendered." One of the flags captured by the 12th New Jersey was that of the 26th North Carolina. The story from the North Carolinians was that as First Sergeant James M. Brooks and David Thomas, who was carrying the flag, "reached the enemy's works, the Federals called out to them, 'Come over on this side of the Lord,' and took them prisoners rather than fire at them."[112]

Bowen, as a sergeant, was in the line of file closers. These men were responsible for ensuring that the men in the first two ranks maintained their respective positions. Bowen fired thirty to forty rounds. As a file closer he was not necessarily required to fire. But he "set on one knee and one foot, extending my gun as far to the front as I could reach, this only brought the muzzle near the ears of the men in front line, each time I fired they looked back and told me I would shoot them, swearing about it, I told them they need not fear."[113]

As the Confederates were advancing up the slope, some Federal soldiers began shouting "Fredericksburg."

"Ominous word," wrote one veteran. "The slaughter at the heights of St. Marye had not been forgotten, and the fate that there befell Burnside's brave men in blue now awaited the brave men



The repulse of Pettigrew and Trimble by Hays's division. Map by John Heiser

in gray."[114]

Lt. John L. Brady, 1st Delaware, remembered that General Hays, "faithful and fearless as an Athena in wisdom, as Ajax in strength, an Achilles in concentrated valor," had dismounted and had joined Brady in the rear of the 1st Delaware. "And by his presence," Brady wrote, "inspired the hearts of that heroic band, with renewed hope and joy, and joyful encouragement to bear their breasts…"[115]

Lieutenant Colonel Sawyer and his men from the 8th Ohio, having stopped Brockenbrough's brigade, now took on Brig. Gen. Joseph R. Davis' brigade by changing "front forward on the left company, thus presenting our front to the left flank of the advancing rebel column. Our fire was

poured into their flank with terrible effect for a few minutes before the Second Brigade at the battery opened."[116]

Capt. Samuel C. Armstrong, 125th New York, and Capt. Morris Brown, 126th New York, were in charge of the 3rd Brigade pickets, to the right of the 8th Ohio. Armstrong had withdrawn the line for a rest to the skirmish reserve in the Emmitsburg road at about noon. This reserve was stationed near the David Ziegler farm house. When Armstrong saw the Confederate advance he ordered the skirmish reserve and all the men he could muster, about seventy-five, "to fall in, and led them on the 'double-quick' about three hundred yards down the Emmettsburg road, to get at the enemy in flank." Joining on to the left flank of the 8th Ohio, Armstrong found a rail fence at a right angle to the advancing enemy line. He posted his men along the fence and "leveling their guns on the top rail they made every shot tell for the extreme left of the enemy was in short range. What with the fierce fire from the infantry and artillery on our main line in front of them and that on their flank they fell literally in heaps and broke."[117]

By this time the troops of Brig. Gen. James H. Lane's brigade of North Carolinians had joined the left flank of Pettigrew's column and were extending the Confederate line to the north. Lane reported that he "advanced to within a few yards of the stone wall, exposed all the while to a heavy raking artillery fire from the right. My left was here very much exposed, and a column of the enemy's infantry was thrown forward in that direction, which enfiladed my whole line."[118]

Lt. Thomas L. Norwood, of the 37th North Carolina, remembered that after crossing a plank fence he "was followed by the whole command, so far as I know. The cannoneers then left their guns. I rushed forward thinking the day was ours, and when within twenty yards of the enemy's works was called by Lieut. [William N.] Mickle who told me that our line had fallen back. Just then he and I and Lieut. [James M.] Royster, (the only other man that I remember seeing so near the works), were shot down."[119]

Capt. William T. Magruder, assistant adjutant general of Davis's brigade, "was killed upon the wall near the Bryan barn whilst cheering the men over the wall." This took place just north of the Brian barn. Lt. A.J. Baker, Company A, 11th Mississippi, "was wounded when within ten feet of the stone wall and twenty feet to the left of the barn, and was captured by troops coming from the left flank."[120]

Maj. Joseph H. Saunders, 33rd North Carolina, had been acting as the left guide to the line of battle when he was shot by troops on the left flank. Lane ordered Col. C.M. Avery, 33rd North Carolina, "to move to meet the force above referred to, when he quickly replied, 'My God General, do you intend rushing your men into such a place unsupported, when the troops on the right are falling back.'" [121]

These witnesses seem to place at least a portion of Lane's and Davis's brigades north of the Brian barn. Most interpretations of the battle place most, if not all, of the Confederate forces at least at or south of the Brian barn. This interpretation also fits in with the idea that the 8th Ohio was posted at or near a road cut on the Emmitsburg road near the David Ziegler farm. Lieutenant Colonel Sawyer reported that his regiment "pressed forward, capturing a large number of prisoners (about 200) and 3 stand of colors."[122]

Capt. Aaron P. Seeley, 111th New York, remembered that some of the Confederates had rallied behind the Brian barn and "commenced firing upon us at short range. Our men … made a rush and killed or captured this fragment of the enemy."[123]

Col. Eliakim Sherrill, commanding the 3rd Brigade, was shot through the bowels and mortally wounded while riding his horse behind the line of the 111th New York. Sherrill was assisted off the field by some members of the 39th New York "who were glad of an excuse to get to the rear." Maj. Hugo Hildebrandt, 39th New York, was also severely wounded. The wounding of Sherrill and MacDougall left the 3rd Brigade temporarily in command of Lt. Col. James M. Bull, 126th New York, who, at the time, was the senior officer present.[124]

Sgt. George A. Bowen, 12th New Jersey, recalled that one Confederate got behind the Brian barn and seemed to be pointing his gun at Bowen. Bowen called Lt. Frank M. Acton's attention to

the man "and said shoot him, he shot and the man fell dead, Acton said if he hit him it was in the head." Bowen claimed he later saw the dead Confederate "with a bullet through the center of his forhead."[125]

Lt. John L. Brady, 1st Delaware, reported that his regimental flag had fallen. He placed the flag in the hands of Sgt. Thomas Seymour, "advising him to assume a kneeling attitude … and thus while partly shielding his body behind the crest of our works, support the colors in that position." About two minutes later Sergeant Seymour, "a faithful and earnest soldier, and true Christian gentleman," was hit in the chest by a solid shot and instantly killed.[126]

Part of the fire hitting Lane's brigade was coming from the 108th New York and the 126th New York, located to the right of the 108th. The 108th New York had helped to move Woodruff's guns to the western edge of Ziegler's Grove. Just prior to the Confederate advance Colonel Pierce, at Woodruff's request, "moved the left wing of the regiment on the left of the battery, and the right wing on the right." The regiment, or at least the right wing, was then "taken out of the grove, drawn up in line of battle and then told to kneel down until the word to fire." After Lane had crossed the Emmitsburg road, the 108th "advanced and gave them their balls."[127]

Forming to the right of the 126th New York was the company of Andrew's sharpshooters. Lieutenant Bicknell reported that when the skirmishers from the 125th and 126th New York "swung forward to the lane, and thus flanked the right of the charging columns, I went down with them and fired into the mass of men until they retreated."[128]

Lieutenant Woodruff ordered two of his guns "to a point where an enfilade fire could be had upon the enemy." Colonel Pierce remembered that Woodruff "had two or three charges of canister placed in the limber of the left piece, and with a single pair of horses, moved the piece over a stone-wall that had been nearly demolished by the shots that struck it, unlimbered, and fired two or three shots into the moving mass, it seemed to me in thirty seconds."[129]

Lt. John Egan, commanding the left section of the battery, remembered the incident somewhat differently. He wrote that after "the front of the battery was cleared," Woodruff "feared the enemy was coming up in a little lane on my left, and that I must at once move and fire down it." Woodruff agreed to bring up Egan's limbers. After doing so, Woodruff "turned to ride to the right pieces, he was hit in the side, and dismounted." Egan limbered up and moved to the place indicated by Woodruff "after the enemy in our front had disappeared." Egan found that Woodruff "had been mistaken." But Alexander Hays directed Egan "to hurry to the left, toward Cushing's battery, which he [Hays] said was in great danger." Egan formed his section on the right of Cushing's battery and opened fire with canister. Due to a shortage of men, Egan was forced to use his drivers as cannoneers.[130]

For the Confederates, "there was no semblance of formation remaining, only a great mass of desperate men pushing on, the color-bearers keeping well to the front." As this mass neared the 1st Delaware, the regiment "with iron will stubbornly maintained its position, and repulsed the combined attack." One veteran remembered that "none of them reached a point in our front nearer than fifty yards."[131]

The 14th Connecticut, to the left of the 1st Delaware, had had to assume a single-rank formation in order to cover the space left vacant by the removal of Arnold's battery. The two companies that had been on the skirmish line retired and formed on the right of the regimental line as already noted. These men were armed with Sharp's rifles. Some of these men were actually armed with two such rifles. "So rapid was this firing," noted one veteran, "that the barrels became so hot that it was almost impossible to use them, some using the precious water in their canteens to pour upon the overworked guns."[132]

Sergeant Hirst, 14th Connecticut, remembered Brig. Gen. John Gibbon, commanding the 2nd Division, 2nd Corps, giving "a word of cheer" to each regiment. Gibbon was telling each regiment that the "Fate of the whole Army now rests with you. Don't Fire until you get the order, and then fire Low and Sure." Hirst noted that both General Hays and Major Ellis also issued "a few more words" and "there runs along the Line Ready, up with our Flags, Aim, Fire. And time it was too,

for the Rebels seemed to me to be within 150 yards of us, just crossing the fences on the Emmitsburg road, and we could hear their officers pressing them on to the charge."[133]

About seventy yards in front of both the 14th Connecticut and the 1st Delaware was a post-and-rail fence that ran for about 700 feet northward from the Angle. One veteran recalled that on July 2 "the boys were about to tear down a fence that ran part way across this field in our front, but some of the Division or Brigade staff stopped them saying that the fence might be of some use in another direction." Lt. Col. Samuel G. Shepard, 7th Tennessee, reported that this fence "was a very great obstruction to us, but the men rushed over as rapidly as they could." Sergeant Hirst noted that "none could get over a low rail fence a short distance in front of the stone wall without our permission."[134]

The Confederate color-bears continued to advance, "apparently in obedience to previous orders," planted their flags in the ground, and then laid down "waiting for their men to advance and rally around them." One color-bearer planted his flag near the line of the rail fence "in front of the center of the Fourteenth." Sergeant Hirst recalled that this color-bearer, "rested his colors before him, then drew himself up to his full hight, looking us calmly in the face. There he stood for several awful moments, when the sharp crack of two or three rifles fired simultaneously sent his brave soul to its Maker."[135]

Seeing this flag, Major Ellis called for volunteers to capture it. Sgt. Maj. William B. Hincks, Capt. John C. Broatch, and Sgt. George N. Brigham jumped over the wall. Brigham was shot almost at once. Hincks beat the captain to the flag "amid a storm of shot." Hincks swung his sword "over the prostate Confederates and uttering a terrific yell, he seized the flag and hastily returned to the line. He was the object of all eyes and the men cheered him heartily as he reached the ranks." Hincks was credited with capturing the flag of the 14th Tennessee.[136]

Being on the extreme left of Hays's line, the 14th Connecticut made a connection with the 2nd Brigade of the 2nd Division (the Philadelphia brigade). The brigade was commanded by Brig. Gen. Alexander S. Webb. When the Confederates gained a foothold in Webb's line, Ellis ordered "an oblique fire from our lines" and assisted in displacing them.[137]

As the Confederate troops began to fall back, the men of Hays's division wanted to make sure they continued their retreat. The 8th Ohio, along with the skirmishers of the 125th and 126th New York, "pressed forward, capturing a large number of prisoners (about 200) and 3 stand of colors." When the charge was broken the 1st Delaware "sprang over the wall and gave them a countercharge, capturing many prisoners and flags." In this charge Lt. William Smith, commanding the regiment, "fell, and, when picked up, his sword was found in one hand and a captured rebel flag in the other." A portion of the 14th Connecticut "charged upon the retreating rebels capturing five regimental battle-flags and over 40 prisoners." Color Sgt. Harrison Clark, 125th New York, "sprang over the wall and bore the flag proudly down the slope to the fence skirting the Emmetsburg road."[138]

Near the close of the fighting Hays received some much needed reinforcements. The 2nd Division, 1st Corps, under Brig. Gen. John C. Robinson, was moved up from its position to the left and rear of Cemetery Hill. Brig. Gen. Henry Baxter reported that in moving up "we passed under one of the most galling fires of artillery ever witnessed. The main attack had been repulsed." Two additional batteries, Battery G, 2nd U.S. Artillery, and Battery F, 5th U.S. Artillery, were brought up to Ziegler's Grove on the repulse of the attack. Lt. John C. Turnbull was placed in command of what was left of his battery (Batteries F & K, 3rd U.S. Artillery) and the 9th Massachusetts Battery. These two batteries, numbering a total of four guns, were "placed in position on right center, on left of Cemetery Hill, under immediate command of General Baxter."[139]

All these units "were sorely annoyed by the enemy's skirmishers and sharpshooters." The 12th Massachusetts and a detachment from the 90th Pennsylvania were ordered to drive back the enemy's skirmishers. This was done "promptly and with deserved credit to those engaged." Lt. Richard S. Milton, commanding the 9th Massachusetts Battery, reported that he fired at least

fifteen rounds "at skirmishers in a barn about 600 yards to our front." After this Robinson's division threw up "breastworks of rails." [140]

Hays had had two horses shot from under him during the engagement. One horse, "Dan," was killed by a cannon shot. The other, "Leet," was shot in the chest by three balls. His third horse "was one of 'Uncle Sam's' and of little account." Hays and his two chief aides, Capt. George P. Corts, assistant adjutant-general, and Lt. David Shields, his aide, were untouched. Shields, however, did have "the shoulder of his coat blown off by a shell" and a horse killed, and Corts "had his knuckles skinned" and two horses killed. When the battle started, Hays had fifteen mounted orderlies. At the close of the battle he had two. One of the orderlies lost his horse and "my standard bearer – had his flagstaff cut in two."[141]

The men of the division now started to "gather around their chief to congratulate him. Reeking with dust and sweat, and weary with the toil of the battle, they received the commendation they so richly deserved. How proud they were of their commander! How proud he was of his 'boys.'" Hays felt he knew whose command had won the battle. "It was 'The Blue Birds,'" he wrote, "whose badge is the 'Shamrock,' worn by my forefathers in primitive days, and my banner is borne by a true son of the Emerald Isle, who don't fear the devil [if I am leading].[142]

One of the most dramatic moments of the battle occurred shortly after the repulse. Hays was presented with a captured flag by a captain in the 126th New York. This may have been the flag of the 28th North Carolina, Lane's brigade. The flag was inscribed with the words "Harper's Ferry." Two members of Hays's staff were also presented with captured flags. The three officers then "rode down in front of his [Hays's] command, and in the rear, trailing the Rebel colors in the dust, and amid the deafening shouts and cheers of the men who for a moment forgot the terrible battle scenes and thought only of the glory of their victory."[143]

Hays was justly proud of his division. They had captured at least fifteen battle flags. More flags had been captured, "but had been surreptitiously disposed of, in the subsequent excitement of battle, before they could be collected." Hays could not give an accurate account of the number of prisoners, but he estimated that it "cannot be less than 1,500." His men also collected 2,500 stand of arms and left an estimated 1,000 "upon the ground for want of time to collect them." Hays concluded, "My division is the fighting kind I love." Hays also felt that since his defenses "were stone walls, and since Jackson is dead I think I have a claim to his title."[144]

Shortly after the retreat, Brig. Gen. Alexander Webb came to Hays to inform him that "Armistead and a large number of his men got inside my lines and among some of my guns and many of them were killed there." "They didn't touch any of my guns," replied Hays, "neither did a Rebel fall within my lines." The conversation abruptly stopped. [145]

Colonel McDougal, 111th New York, had been wounded at the beginning of the charge but stayed with his command during the fighting. He went to the hospital to have his wound attended to after the charge was repulsed. On his return he found Hays "lying under the fly of a tent in the orchard of the Bryan house, just in the rear of my regiment." The colonel sat on the ground with Hays, who asked him about his injury. Beside them "lay a large pile of captured flags; he asked me to count them, and I counted twenty-one flags, large and small." Just then a staff officer from General Webb approached and asked Hays for some of the flags, which Webb claimed had been captured by him.

> General Hays replied with a good deal of warmth, "How in h—l did I get them if he captured them?" and calling to his aide, Lieut. Shields, "Oh, Dave!" pick out half a dozen flags and send them to General Webb as a present, with my compliments; we have so many here we don't know what to do with them and Webb needs them.[146]

Hays and two members of his staff ride in front of his division dragging captured Confederate standards behind them in this Audley D. Nichols painting. *General Alexander Hays at the Battle of Gettysburg*

Hays was under no illusion as to what the battle had cost. "The angle of death alone," he wrote in his official report, "can produce such a field as was presented." In a private letter Hays wrote, "I never in my thoughts dwell upon the thirty minutes of carnage I witnessed." In another letter he wrote,

> Women may lecture on "The Horrors of War," but such a scene of carnage I never imagined. Carnage himself [if an artist] could not paint the picture. Dead horses, shattered carriages, dead and dying men, in all the last agonies of death for two full hours, would have paralyzed anyone not trained to the "butcher trade." The night following the battle on the 3rd I rode out, and over the battlefield at 2 o'clock A. M. I could scarcely find passage for my horse, for the dead and wounded. In one road it was impassable until I had them removed. The shrieks of anguish and prayers for relief were heartrending.[147]

On July 1, Hays's division had numbered 3,644 officers and men. By the end of the third day of battle, he had lost 1,291, about 35 percent of his strength. Carroll's brigade lost 211 out of 941 engaged. The 8th Ohio had the highest casualties in Carroll's brigade, losing 102 out of 209 engaged, almost 50 percent. The highest losses within the division would be recorded by the 2nd

and 3rd brigades. Smyth's brigade lost 360 of 1,105 engaged. The 108th New York lost 102 out of 200, mostly by artillery fire on July 3. Willard's brigade lost 714 of 1,508 in two days of fighting. The 111th New York lost 249 men out of 309 engaged.[148]

Hays wrote that he wanted to notify Meade and the War Department regarding, "the gallant conduct of my commanders of brigades and regiments, trusting that they, in return, will not be forgetful of meritorious subordinates. When all behaved unexceptionably it is difficult to discriminate. The coolness and determination evinced by our officers and men reflect back credit on their former commanders."[149]

Hays felt that his medical director, Doctor Isaac Scott, 7th West Virginia, and his assistants were due a "high recommendation of credit." He reported, "No case of neglect or evasion of their duties has come to my notice." Hays added that Lt. John S. Sullivan, of the ambulance corps, deserved the "highest credit for his courage and the fearless manner he discharged his duties, continually, under the fire of the enemy's skirmishers, bringing off the wounded and assisting in keeping up the stragglers."[150]

Another soldier wrote to his hometown newspaper about the efforts of Lieutenant Sullivan:

> Where men are killed and wounded, there must go the officers of the ambulance brigade…many a time did I watch anxiously, fearing any moment to see him fall, our ambulance lieutenant, Sullivan, of the 14th Indiana…as he coolly rode all over the field, sometimes in the thickest of the firing, and away to the front even of our pickets, on his errand of mercy, not satisfied to leave a single suffering man uncared for on the bloody field, and having his black horse at last shot under him, besides many hair-breadth escapes.[151]

At the close of Pickett's Charge, Sullivan was ordered to report to Hays's headquarters. Hays told Sullivan, "Well, young man, I see you did your duty." Sullivan replied "Yes, general, I try to obey orders." Hays ordered Sullivan to report to him the next morning (July 4), when Hays appointed Sullivan to his staff.[152]

Second Lieutenant Edgar J. Hueston, 111th New York, also attracted Hays's attention "by his exemplary conduct in charge of posting and encouraging our pickets." Hays also named him as an aide on his staff.[153]

Maj. Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock, commanding the 2nd Corps, had been seriously wounded during the fighting on July 3. Brig. Gen. John Gibbon, Hancock's designated successor, had also been seriously wounded, so Hancock had the next senior officer in the corps, Brig. Gen. John C. Caldwell, 1st Division, 2nd Corps, assume command.[154]

Apparently it seemed best to Major General Meade "to disturb the natural succession according to rank" and appoint Brig. Gen. *William* Hays to command of the 2nd Corps. William Hays had commanded a brigade at Chancellorsville, where he had been captured on May 3, 1863. Even though he had been exchanged by May 15, he does not appear in the records until July 3, 1863, when he apparently arrived, somewhat unannounced, at Meade's headquarters. Meade appointed *William* Hays to command despite the fact that John C. Caldwell and *Alexander* Hays both outranked him.[155]

Alexander Hays continued to command the 3rd Division until the army reorganization of March 1864. At that time he was, in a sense, "demoted" to brigade command. His new brigade, however, contained his old regiment, the 63rd Pennsylvania.

On May 5, 1864, during the battle of the Wilderness, Hays was directed to place his brigade on the extreme right of the 2nd Corps and to make a connection with the 6th Corps on its left. Being unable to find the line to make a connection, Hays's brigade advanced through the Wilderness to meet the enemy. Early in the engagement, Hays was riding along the line of battle when he stopped "to speak a few words of cheer and encouragement" to the men of the 63rd Pennsylvania. At that moment he was struck in the head and fell from his horse. He was dead within three hours.[156]

When informed of Hays's death, Lt. Gen. U. S. Grant, Hays's West Point classmate, remarked, "I am not surprised that he met his death at the head of his troops; it was just like him. He was a man who would never follow, but would always lead in battle."[157]

The historian of the 2nd Corps recorded that,

> At Gettysburg, at Bristoe, at Mine Run, at Morton's Ford, this devoted officer rode, with his staff and flag behind him, the mark of a thousand riflemen, the admiration of two armies, only to fall in a tangled wilderness where scarce a regiment could note his person, and derive inspiration from his courage and martial enthusiasm.[158]

Col. Clinton D. MacDougall, 111th New York, described Hays as "that gallant and chivalrous soldier, whose loyalty was only equaled by his intrepidity in battle; whose very presence was inspiration itself. It may truly be said of him, 'one blast upon his bugle horn, were worth a thousand men.'"[159]

Hays exhibited all these qualities and more on the battlefield of Gettysburg. He was not content to just sit by and watch events unfold if he had any way of controlling them. He did not hesitate to expose himself, or his staff, in placing the 39th New York on the skirmish line on July 2. Several soldiers, officers and enlisted, noted that Hays seemed to be on the front line or in close proximity to it at all times. He was an inspiring leader to his men, cheering them when needed and encouraging them to do their best.

Hays felt that the war "is a trial, not a judgment, upon our nation, and that we will come out of it as 'refined gold.'" He was also philosophical about his own death. In a letter written shortly after Gettysburg he wrote,

> I was fighting for my native state, and before I went in thought of those at home I so dearly love. If Gettysburg was lost all was lost for them, and I only interposed a life that would be otherwise worthless.[160]

Notes

[1] Letter of Alexander Webb to his wife, August 8, 1863. Copy filed in Gettysburg National Military Park Library Vertical File 5: Webb, Alexander.
[2] Gilbert Adams Hays, comp., *Under the Red Patch: Story of the Sixty Third Regiment.* (Pittsburgh, Penna.: Sixty-Third Pennsylvania Volunteers Regimental Association, 1908), 71, 232, 233; Horace Porter, *Campaigning with Grant* (New York: The Century Company, 1896), 223.
[3] Press Association, comp., *The Cyclopedia of American Biography* (New York: The Press Association, 1915), 123; Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone, eds., *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946), 7:460; Ezra J. Warner, *Generals in Blue* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1964), 224.
[4] Press Association, 123; Johnson and Malone, 461; Warner, 223; Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army, 1789-1903* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), 1:516; Association of Graduates, *Register of Graduates* (West Point, N.Y.: Association of Graduates, 1990), 269.
[5] Johnson and Malone, 461; Warner, 223.
[6] Press Association, 123; Warner, 224. The 12th Pennsylvania was a three-month regiment and was mustered out on August 5, 1861.
[7] Samuel P. Bates, *History of Pennsylvania Volunteers* (Harrisburg, Penna.: B. Singerly, state printer, 1869-1871), 2:489, 490.
[8] Hays, 31.
[9] George Thornton Fleming, *Life and Letters of Alexander Hays* (Pittsburgh, Penna: Gilbert Adams Hays, 1919), 143.
[10] Ibid., 146.
[11] Hays, 31.
[12] Ibid., 70, 71.
[13] Fleming, 174.
[14] Ibid., 104, 105.
[15] U.S. War Department. *The War of the Rebellion: The Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies.* 128 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Series 1, 11(2):162, 163, 177, 178, 128. [Hereafter cited as *OR*.]
[16] *OR,* Series 1, 12(2):422; Hays, 105.
[17] *OR,* Series 1, 12 (2):422; Hays, 150; Fleming, 267.
[18] Fleming, 271, 272.
[19] Warner, 224; *OR*, Series 1, 21, 953; *OR*, Series 1, 51(1):970, 975; Fleming, 273, 274.
[20] *OR*, Series 1, 25(2):30.
[21] Eric Campbell, "'Remember Harper's Ferry': The Degradation, Humiliation, and Redemption of Col. George L. Willard's Brigade," *Gettysburg Magazine* 7 (July 1992):51-75.
[22] Fleming, 304.
[23] Ibid., 339.
[24] Ibid., 340.
[25] Ibid., 341.
[26] Ibid., 338.
[27] Arabella M. Willison, *Disaster, Struggle, Triumph: The Adventures of 1000 "Boys in Blue"* (Albany, N.Y.: Argus Company, 1870), 139.
[28] Fleming, 386; Brig. Gen. John J. Abercrombie had assumed command of Silas Casey's old division on April 17, 1863 (*OR*, Series 1, 25(2):586).
[29] Fleming, 394.
[30] Ibid., 399; John Day Smith, *The History of the Nineteenth Regiment of Maine Volunteer Infantry* (Minneapolis: Great Western Printing Co., 1909), 56; Earnest L. Waitt, *History of the Nineteenth Regiment Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry* (Salem, Mass.: Salem Press Co., 1906), 214, 215; Wayne Mahood, *"Written in Blood:" A History of the 126th New York Infantry in the Civil War* (Hightstown, N.J.: Longstreet House, 1997), 107. This incident was not mentioned in Francis Walker, *History of the Second Army Corps* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1887). Walker merely stated: "On the 20th Centreville was reached. On the 21st the corps moved to Thoroughfare Gap…"

[31] Eric Campbell, ed., *"A Grand Terrible Dramma" From Gettysburg to Petersburg: The Civil War Letters of Charles Wellington Read* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000), 111-112.
[32] Fleming, 401; Willison, 149, 151.
[33] Fleming, 401, 402; Frank J. Welcher, *The Union Army, 1861-1865: Organization and Operations.* Vol. 1: *The Eastern Theater* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 321; Francis A. Walker, *History of the Second Army Corps* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1887), 259, 260; Warner, 225; *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):55; *OR*, Series 1, 27(3):291; Fleming, 402. The 3rd Brigade had been discontinued on May 23, 1863 and reorganized June 26, 1863.
[34] Fleming, 404; Campbell, "Remember Harper's Ferry," 59.
[35] Johnson and Malone, 3:528, 529; Warner, 73.
[36] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):158; Frederick H. Dyer, *A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion*, 3 vols. (1909; reprint, New York: Thomas Yoseloff, Ltd., 1959), 1124, 1497, 1499, 1663.
[37] Warner, 465-466.
[38] *OR,* Series 1, 25(1):160; *OR*, Series 1, 25(2):577; Welcher, 320.
[39] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):158; Dyer, 1012, 1017, 1361, 1409, 1447; Janet B. Jewett, ed., *Supplement to the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Wilmington, N.C.: Broadfoot Publishing Co., 1997), 43:7; Charles W. Cowtan, *S ervices of the Tenth New York Volunteers* (New York: Charles H. Ludwig, 1882), 183; New York Monuments Commission for the Battlefields of Gettysburg and Chattanooga, *Final Report on the Battlefield of Gettysburg* (Albany: J. B. Lyon Co., 1902), 1:271.
[40] Ezra D. Simons, *A Regimental History: The One Hundred and Twenty-Fifth New York State Volunteers* (New York: Ezra D. Simons, 1888), 118-120; Heitman, 1038.
[41] Simons, 118-119.
[42] Benjamin W. Thompson. "This Hell of Destruction." The Benjamin W. Thompson Memoir, Part II. *Civil War Times Illustrated,* Vol. XII, #6 (October 1973), 16 (hereinafter cited as Thompson Memoir).
[43] Fleming, 402, 403; *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):455.
[44] Thompson Memoir, 16.
[45] *OR,* Series 1, 27(3):395, 396.
[46] Willison, 152.
[47] Fleming, 404.
[48] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):369, 455.
[49] *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):453.
[50] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):724, 726. Neither Hays nor any of his commanders mention the 11th Corps in their official reports. (See also: L.A. Smith, "Recollections of Gettysburg," *War Papers Read Before the Michigan Commandery of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States* (Detroit: James H. Stone & Co., 1898), 2:297-308.)
[51] Fleming, 453.
[52] Marcella Scherfy, *The Brien Farm and Family* (Gettysburg: Resources Management Division, Gettysburg National Military Park, 1972), 4, 5.
[53] *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):478; William L. Haskins, *The History of the First Regiment of Artillery* (Portland, Maine: B. Thurston, 1879), 170. George Augustus Woodruff graduated from West Point on June 24, 1861, with the ranks of first and second lieutenant (Heitman, 1057, 1058).
[54] Willison, 158; Massachusetts Adjutant General, *Massachusetts Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines in the Civil War* (Norwood, Mass.: Norwood Press, 1931), 1:205; C. A. Stevens, *Berdan's United States Sharpshooters in the Army of the Potomac* (1892; reprint, Dayton, Ohio: Morningside Bookshop, 1984), 205.
[55] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):456, 464, 472.
[56] Dennis H. Mahan, *Out-Post* (1861; reprint, n.p., n.d.), 48-50; William J. Hardee, *Hardee's Instruction for Skirmishers* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1861), 7.
[57] Mahan, 50.
[58] Henry S. Stevens. *Souvenir of Excursion to Battlefields by the Society of the Fourteenth Connecticut Regiment.* (Washington, DC: Gibson Brothers, 1893), 16 & 17.
[59] Fleming, 431.
[60] Ibid., 410. Hays's standard-bearer was Private Thomas Carroll, Company I, 5th New York Cavalry. He had enlisted on April 8, 1863, at the age of 21 (Adjutant General, *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of the State of New York* [Albany: James B. Lyon, State Printer, 1895], 2:49).

[61] Richard S. Thompson, "A Scrap of Gettysburg," *Military Essays and Recollections: Papers Read Before the Commandery of the State of Illinois, Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States* (1899; reprint, Wilmington, N.C.: Broadfoot Publishing Company, 1992), 3:98.
[62] "The Diary of Captain George A. Bowen, 12th Regiment New Jersey Volunteers," *Valley Forge Journal* (December 1989), 129-130. Bowen had been mustered into U.S. service on September 14, 1862 as a sergeant. He was made a captain in 1864.
[63] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):457, 461.
[64] Ibid., 457.
[65] Ibid., 453, 472.
[66] Ibid., 472.
[67] Ibid., 453.
[68] Charles D. Page, *History of the Fourteenth Regiment, Connecticut Vol. Infantry* (Meriden, Conn.: Horton Publishing, Co., 1906), 142.
[69] Thompson Memior, 19 & 20. "A Scrap of Gettysburg."
[70] Ibid.; Willison, 178.
[71] Thompson Memior, 19 & 20.,
[72] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):454, 465.
[73] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):478.
[74] David J. Ladd and Audrey J. Ladd, eds. *The Bachelder Papers: Gettysburg in Their Own Words* (Dayton, Ohio: Morningside Press, 1994), 3:1752.
[75] Ibid., 2:1183; Fleming, 432. Sgt. Charles A. Hitchcock (1842-1900) was commissioned a second lieutenant on November 25, 1863, to rank from June 1, 1863. This promotion was partially due to the personal recommendation of Gen. Hays (Fleming, 432; Ladd and Ladd, 3:1736). See also Edwin C. Hill, *The Historical Register: A Biographical Record of the Men of Our Time Who Have Contributed to the Making of America* (New York: Edwin C. Hill, 1919), 80-81.
[76] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):454, 467.
[77] Ibid., 454, 465, 466, 470, 471.
[78] Ibid., 472.
[79] Ibid., 457, 461.
[80] Ibid., 454, 476.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Willison, 181.
[83] Thompson Memior, 21.
[84] Haskins, 170; George H. Washburn, *A Complete Military History and Record of the 108th New York Volunteers From 1862 to 1864* (Rochester, N.Y.: E. R. Andrews, 1894), 52.
[85] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):466; Washburn, 52. According to regulations the distance between the line of guns and limbers was to be six yards, "measured from the end of the handspike to the heads of the leading horses." The distance between the line of limbers and caissons was eleven yards, "measuring from the rear of the limbers to the heads of the leading horses of the caissons." William H. French, William F. Barry & Henry J. Hunt, *Instructions for Field Artillery* (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1864), 185.
[86] Joint Committee, *Report of the Joint Committee to Mark the Positions Occupied by the 1st and 2nd Delaware Regiments at the Battle of Gettysburg* (Dover, Del.: Delawarean Office, 1887), 10; Fleming, 450.
[87] Washburn, 50; *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):465.
[88] Ladd and Ladd, 2:1188.
[89] John W. Busey, *These Honored Dead: The Union Casualties at Gettysburg* (Hightstown, N.J.: Longstreet House, 1996), 177, 179.
[90] Fleming, 433.
[91] Robert L. Bee, ed., *The Boys From Rockville: Civil War Narratives of Sgt. Benjamin Hirst, Company D, 14th Connecticut Volunteers* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1998), 149.
[92] Washburn, 52.
[93] Fleming, 453.
[94] Ibid.; Ladd and Ladd, 1:79, 407; *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):461, 467, 471, 476; Keith Snipes, "The Improper Placement of the 8th Ohio Monument: A Study of Words and Maps," *Gettysburg Magazine,* no. 35, 69-93; New York Monuments Commission, 1:277. The inscription on the monument to the 39th New York states that "This regiment composed of four companies held this position July 2 and 3, 1863." The 39th New York

arrived in Gettysburg with 269 officers and men. The unit had about 85 casualties on July 2, leaving it with roughly 184 men. This would give each company about 46 men. This would have placed approximately 90 men on the skirmish line and 90 men on the main line.
[95] Page, 152; Ladd and Ladd, 1:407; *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):480; Haskins, 170.
[96] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1), 454, 465, 467.
[97] Fleming, 438-439. Bicknell wrote that this position was in the area of the 88th Pennsylvania Monument.
[98] Bee, 150.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Diary of Charles W. Belknap, copy on file in the Gettysburg National Military Park files: Belknap, Charles W.
[101] August V. Kautz, *Customs of Service for Non-Commissioned Officers and Soldiers* (1864; reprint, Mechanicsburg, Penna.: Stackpole Books, 2001), 241, 242.
[102] William P. Seville, *History of the First Regiment, Delaware Volunteers* (Wilmington: Historical Society of Delaware, 1884), 81, 82; Ladd and Ladd, 3:1398.
[103] Samuel Toombs, *New Jersey Troops in the Gettysburg Campaign* (1888; reprint, Hightstown, N.J.: Longstreet House, 1988), 290. The stuffing of cartridges with several rounds of buckshot is reported to have been done by members of the 69th Pennsylvania, but not by the 12th New Jersey.
[104] Washburn, 50; Catherine Crary, ed., *Dear Belle: Letters from a Cadet & Officer to his Sweetheart, 1858-1865* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, n.d.), 209; Haskins, 170.
[105] Crary, 209, 210. Woodruff's battery was delivering approximately 324 canister balls per minute down range. Tully McCrea graduated from West Point on June 17, 1862 with the rank of second lieutenant.
[106] Franklin Sawyer, *A Military History of the 8th Regiment Ohio Vol. Inf'y* (1881; reprint, Huntington,W.V.: Blue Acorn Press, 1994), 131.
[107] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):462.
[108] Michael W. Taylor, "North Carolina in the Pickett-Pettigrew-Trimble Charge at Gettysburg," *Gettysburg Magazine,* no. 8 (1993), 76, 78.
[109] Ladd and Ladd, 1:408; "Diary of Captain George A. Bowen," 133; Seville, 81.
[110] Fleming, 458; Seville, 81; William P. Haines, *History of the Men of Co. F, with Description of the Marches and Battles of the 12th New Jersey Vols* (Mickleton, N.J.: Wm. P. Haines, 1897), 42.
[111] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):454.
[112] "Diary of Captain George A. Bowen," 133**;** Weymouth T. Jordan, Jr., compiler. *Roster of North Carolina Troops,* (Raleigh, NC: Division of Archives and History, 1979), 7:521, 531.
[113] "Diary of Captain George A. Bowen," 133.
[114] Toombs, 290.
[115] Ladd and Ladd, 3:1397.
[116] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):462.
[117] Simons, 136, 137; Ladd and Ladd, 1:316, 341; Ladd and Ladd, 2:1001; Ladd and Ladd, 3:1822. The fence Armstrong referred to may have been a fence marking a farm lane that was opposite the entrance of the present-day Cyclorama Center and that may have run between the current Kentucky Fried Chicken and Pickett's Buffet.
[118] *OR,* Series 1, 27(2):666.
[119] Taylor, 77, 78.
[120] Baxter McFarland, "The Eleventh Mississippi Regiment at Gettysburg," Mississippi Historical Society, Centenary Series II (1918)(city: publisher, date), 552, 553; William A. Love, "Mississippi at Gettysburg," *Publications of the Mississippi Historical Society,* 9 (1906):144. See also Terrence J. Winschel, "Heavy Was Their Loss: Joe Davis' Brigade at Gettysburg," *Gettysburg Magazine,* no. 3 (1990), 77-85.
[121] Taylor, 76, 77.
[122] *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):462. See also Keith Snipes, "A Rediscovered Bachelder Letter: North Carolinians in 'Pickett's Charge,'" *Gettysburg Magazine,* no. 37 (2007), 100-119; and Keith Snipes, "The Improper Placement," 68-93. The current monument to the 8th Ohio may mark the furthest advance made by the regiment.
[123] Ladd and Ladd, 3:1739.
[124] Ibid., 1:343 and 3:1744, 1762; *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):453, 472.
[125] "The Diary of Captain George A. Bowen," 133.
[126] Ladd and Ladd, 3:1399.

[127] Washburn, 50, 52; Haskins, 170.
[128] Ladd and Ladd, 2:964.
[129] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):376, 480. For the movement of the battery see Ladd and Ladd, 3:1977, 1980. These accounts were written by Lt. Tully McCrea, who assumed command of the battery after Woodruff's death; Haskins, 170.
[130] Haskins, 169, 170; Ladd and Ladd, 1:389. John Egan graduated from West Point on June 17, 1862 with the rank of second lieutenant (Heitman, 399).
[131] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):469; Seville, 81.
[132] Ladd and Ladd, 1:408; Page, 152.
[133] Bee, 150.
[134] Joint Committee, *Report of the Joint Committee,* 12; *OR*, Series 1, 27(2):647; Bee, 150.
[135] Page, 153, 154; Bee, 150.
[136] Page, 153, 154. Sergeant Major Hincks was promoted to lieutenant and made regimental adjutant on October 20, 1863. Captain Broatch was promoted to major on October 22, 1864. George N. Brigham was promoted to 2nd lieutenant on November 16, 1863. Page, 374, 417.
[137] Ladd and Ladd, 1:408.
[138] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):462, 467, 469; Simons, 138.
[139] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1), 262, 290, 308, 886; George R. Large, *Battle of Gettysburg: The Official History by the Gettysburg National Military Park Commission* (Shippensburg, Penna.: Burd Street Press, 1999), 219, 229.
[140] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1), 308, 311, 886.
[141] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):455; Fleming, 406, 410.
[142] Fleming, 419, 424.
[143] Ibid., 425, 464, 465. This flag had been captured by Capt. Morris Brown, 126th New York. Ladd and Ladd, 1:316.
[144] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):454; Fleming, 409, 410.
[145] Fleming, 427.
[146] Ibid., 433.
[147] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):454; Fleming, 419, 421.
[148] John W. Busey and David Martin, *Regimental Strengths and Losses at Gettysburg* (Hightstown, N.J.: Longstreet House, 20051986), 243, 244. [Please verify that this is the correct edition, etc.]
[149] Ibid., 454.
[150] Ibid., 454, 455; Newton Allen Strait, *Roster of Regimental Surgeons and Assistant Surgeons in the U. S. Medical Department During the Civil War* (1882; reprint, Gaithersburg, Md.: Olde Soldier Books, Inc., 1989), 224.
[151] Samuel W. Fiske. *Mr. Dunn Browne's Experiences in the Army: The Civil War Letters of Samuel W. Fiske.* Stephen W. Sears, ed. (New York: Fordham University Press, 1998), 128.
[152] Fleming, 415, 416.
[153] Ibid., p. 455. Edgar J. Hueston enlisted on August 8, 1862 as a second lieutenant. He was promoted to first lieutenant on December 8, 1863, and to captain on December 11, 1863. He was wounded on May 19, 1864, at Spotsylvania and again on March 31, 1865, at White Oak Bridge. He was mustered out with his company on June 4, 1865 (New York Adjutant-General, *Annual Report of the Adjutant-General of the State of New York for the Year 1903* [Albany: State Legislative Printer, 1904], 790).
[154] Walker, 300; Fleming, 447, 448.
[155] Walker, 300; Warner, 224, 225. Alexander Hays's appointment to brigadier general was to rank from September 29, 1862. William Hays's appointment was to rank from December 27, 1862. John C. Caldwell's appointment as brigadier general was to rank from April 28, 1862 (Warner, 63, 64).
[156] Hays, 232.
[157] Horace Porter, *Campaigning With Grant* (New York: Century Company, 1896), 223.
[158] Hays, 233.
[159] Ladd and Ladd, 3:1763.
[160] Fleming, 421.